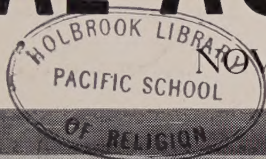


SOCIAL ACTION



NOVEMBER 15, 1944



Against Slums in Washington—F. W. McPeck
For Civic Planning in Cleveland—K. Underwood

SOCIAL ACTION Magazine

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From the Editors

Church and Community

In their famous *Middletown* study, the Lynds reported that the churches of "Middletown" turn question marks into exclamation points. This role has been played by many or most churches in American communities; church members have been taught to endure their social misfortunes with exclamations of faith. Marx's theory of religion as an opiate has often been confirmed in the actual practice of religious institutions. But Brother Dunwoodie is not the entire ecclesiastical procession, and soothing syrup is not the sole remedy offered by the churches. Many ministers and churches have assumed courageous leadership in facing community problems and bringing them to public attention.

Provision of adequate housing will be one of the most serious questions demanding public attention after the war, and the churches may attack it with special appropriateness because of their particular concern for family welfare. As Director of the Department of Social Welfare for the Council of Churches in the nation's capital and as chairman of the Legislative Committee of the Council for Social Action, Francis W. McPeck knows from personal experience that postponement of action until after the war will be too late, because powerful forces are already at work to prevent the resumption of progress in public housing. The facts in his article have been checked with several housing experts and found to be correct. As usual SOCIAL ACTION has permitted the author to make his own judgments on these facts.

Kenneth Underwood went to Cleveland to investigate rumors that the churches of Cleveland were in the forefront of reform movements in that city. Usually skeptical of rumors, Mr. Underwood came back with a story of churches redeemed by a vision of a city redeemed. The churches of Cleveland, not very far from those of "Middletown," have likewise turned question marks into exclamation points, but in different fashion, by facing hard questions honestly and achieving remarkable results.

—L.P.

THE CHURCHES AND PUBLIC HOUSING IN WASHINGTON

by FRANCIS W. McPEEK*

For almost a year now Washington—scene of many a recent lusty brawl—has been witnessing a free-for-all fight over the question of public housing. Ranged on one side are the speculative home builders, private financial institutions and their associates, and certain organizations of property owners. On the other is the local housing authority—the National Capital Housing Authority—and its many friends among civic minded groups. These two sets of combatants have gone at each other hammer and tongs, asking no favor and giving none. Habitually the local newspapers refer to each day's development of the quarrel as "bitter." They have good reason. While at first glance the affair seems to be a neighborhood rumpus, it is actually a pitched battle in the nation-wide war on public housing. It is shot through and through with politics, economics, racial animosity, and general emotionalism.

National Post-War Policy at Stake

Throughout the country the housing industry has intently followed the argument. Similarly it is true that supporters of the public housing movement have given closest attention to it. On all hands there is a recognition that the outcome will be largely influential in shaping the national post-war policy on the problems of slum reclamation and the rehousing of low-income families. Everybody has a stake in the decision.

Housing is our second largest industry and, as such, is one

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of the great stabilizing factors in employment. Wiping out the slums is going to cost money, and plenty of it, and the bill will be rendered to the people who pay taxes. But workers and taxpayers are not the only ones to win or lose. American families now living in the desolate and vice-ridden areas of our cities are going to be the most affected. They are going to have to stay right where they are unless we make an intelligent effort to rebuild our blighted urban areas.

Why Should the Church Be Concerned?

Some business interests have deeply resented the participation of Washington church people in the present dispute. They have unhesitatingly said so. As unhesitatingly we have pointed out the valid reasons for the church's concern.

In the first place, as Christians we believe that the preservation of family life is the basic principle of social welfare. Whatever weakens or destroys family security, as the Archbishop of Canterbury put it, "stands condemned on that account alone." Through wholesome family life children emerge into adulthood as true personalities—healthy in body and mind, with democratic spirit, and able to carry their rightful share of the heavy burdens a complex society imposes upon its mature members. The rights of individuals, which receive such cardinal stress in Christianity, can be guaranteed only by guaranteeing the rights of the family from which the individual springs.

Housing Affects Family Spirit

In the second place, the housing occupied by a family is the greatest single physical determinant of family unity and spirit. Surroundings do make a difference. Motherhood can hardly be lifted from the category of an unskilled trade until the place of a mother's employment contributes materially and psychologically to the fulfilment of her tasks. The debilitating effects of drab and squalid quarters on both parents and children are too obvious to require comment. So also the effects of overcrowding,

of the lack of sanitary equipment, and of the presence of ineradicable filth and vermin. Faced with these obstacles, children simply cannot be brought up in the atmosphere of decency and cleanliness to which they are entitled. "In most of the homes from which our delinquents come," says an experienced police-woman, "there is so little room that even the most intimate requirements of personal life are no longer private." How can children be taught common morality, to say nothing of Christian conduct, when one or two rooms must be the scene of every individual and family act?

Christians Must See Proper Housing Provided

In the third place, Christians have the responsibility of assuring that any job necessary to family solidarity and social morality is done. Christians cannot remain aloof and indifferent, even when action means the arousing of powerful antagonisms based upon property holdings or upon the expectation of unconscionable profit. Slum owners sometimes have fabulous incomes, and they are, as likely as not, considered to be respectable people. Having a fairly good thing, they do not welcome meddlers. But, as a famous churchman once phrased it, "The church was created for the express purpose of interfering with the world."

Support the Better of Two Goods

Often as Christians we are compelled to choose the lesser of two evils. By the force of the same logic, we must choose the better of two goods. When two or more plans of attack on some social problem are presented to us, we have the plain duty of supporting that one which seems most likely to accomplish the desired end. Which proposal, we must inquire, is best calculated to satisfy the need that calls it forth? Which is more in the interest of *all* the people?

Shortly after the Social Welfare Committee of the Washington Federation of Churches made public an explicit statement of its views on the business of slum reclamation and

community redevelopment, a real estate man called the office with pained astonishment registering in his voice. "Of course I understand," he said, "why the churches should want the slums cleaned out. But why are they against private enterprise doing it?"

The answer to his question follows.

The Background of Public Housing

There are few new elements in this present scrap. Over two generations ago public-minded Washingtonians excoriated slums and slum owners, and did their level best to get rid of both of them through the enactment of regulatory laws. They were sick at heart at the sight of the stupid and callous destruction of human values wrought silently by the hovels in which an industrializing civilization was compelling hundreds of thousands to live. The situation was the same in every urban center, in the United States and abroad.

These people of goodwill found out quickly enough, however, that laws covering such matters as standards of construction, sanitation, and safety, did not work. They could not be made to work because there was then, as now, an inadequate supply of good housing at rentals that poor people could pay. "Any roof overhead is better than no roof." Though low-wage workers protested, and though the landlord-tenant's courts were jammed, the slum dwellers had to stay put. There was nowhere else to go, except to equally miserable shelter. Private industry would not—and, in many instances, could not—construct new dwellings for them, or even keep the old ones in repair. After all, there was little incentive to do these things. The dreariest shack or basement seldom remained vacant for long.

The Going-Price on Children

Rent racketeers and slum proprietors laughed at threats of police action. When they were haled into court and were fined, they paid up and cynically charged it off to "operating ex-

penses." They still do. Two years ago in Washington one slum operator was given the unusual fine of \$500.00, the conviction being for failure to correct defective wiring. Five hundred dollars seems to be the going-price on children in Washington, for a little child was burned to death in the fire that resulted. If the history of housing teaches anything, it is this: regulatory laws of any kind will not eliminate sub-standard dwellings *unless the laws are supported by an energetic building program for low-income groups.*

The early forerunners of the public housing movement were wise enough to see this. They did not stop with the passing of their laws. Here and there they formed themselves into "limited dividend" corporations for the purpose of constructing and managing low-rental properties. By building on cheap, raw land, and by limiting their returns on invested money to 4½ to 6% per annum, they made a notable contribution to the health and security of a number of families. They proved that private industry, when it wishes to act with reference to social rather than to profit motives, can do infinitely more than it has until this time been willing to do.

The slums not only persisted, in spite of the activities of the limited dividend corporations, but grew rapidly. These corporations were blocked in their desire to raze the slums because of three factors implicit in the fight today.

The Three Imponderables of the Slums

Power of Eminent Domain Necessary

1. *Slum property is difficult to reassemble*, to get enough of it in one piece to make building operations economical. When only one or two building units are put up, construction costs are relatively high. There is not much point, either, in placing them in a deteriorated neighborhood, for even well constructed houses lose value by blighted surroundings. Therefore it is essential to obtain fairly large tracts—whole blocks or more. The cleared land can then be site planned. New con-

struction can be made to conform to the topography as well as to the day-to-day living needs of prospective tenants. When the plans are expertly made, the creation of future slums is guarded against.

The troubles associated with land reassembly are numerous. Some slum owners refuse to sell under any terms, preferring to hang on to an investment that costs them little and yields them much. Others, when they scent an interest in their properties, promptly jump the asking price to impracticable figures. Then there are some properties with "clouded titles"—properties which have tax liens against them or which are parts of disputed estates. A man in private business is brave indeed to buy these and so to expose his capital to the risk of later law suits.

The only satisfactory solution for the problem of site assembly in the slums is the use of the power of eminent domain, the right by which the Government may, for public or quasi-public use, compel an owner to sell at a price determined as just by the courts.

Private Enterprise Needs Subsidy to Rebuild Slums

2. *Slum sites often cost too much to permit rebuilding for low rentals.*

Land costs are only one cost in the completed dwelling unit. Other costs are for materials, labor, the installation of utilities and streets, and so on. But in slum areas the greatest single outlay may have to be for sites. The reasons have been partially touched upon: the reluctance or inability of owners to sell. As important a reason, though, is the curious logic behind our condemnation laws.

In England, for example, if a house is adjudged unfit for human habitation, it is worth precisely nothing. The Government may pay the owners a fair price for the land on which it stands, and that is all there is to it. With us it is different. Though a house is declared only 10% standard, it is supposed to be worth as much as it might bring on the open market. Since the slum market is as active as any other, fancy prices can

be demanded and—particularly in times of housing shortage—obtained. Our Government has to settle for a good round sum or else engage in lengthy litigation.

Private enterprise—unless it is building expensive apartments or other commercial properties—lets the slums and blighted areas strictly alone. When it wants to construct cheaper housing of any kind, it goes into the raw land areas where building plots can be acquired at minimum cost. In order to build for low-income families in the slums, it would have to be able to purchase its sites at no greater sum than the cheaper, outlying land it already deals in. This it cannot do unless there is an initial subsidy from some other source in the form of a "site write-down" or capital grant.

In short, private enterprise cannot touch the slums for low rent purposes unless somebody else is willing to put up the money. How much is required we shall see later in terms of one illustrative proposal.

Low Incomes Must Be Supplemented

3. *The incomes of a very great proportion of slum dwellers must be supplemented through public funds if they are to be adequately housed.*

"The housing problem," said a Senate report of 1934, "is primarily an economic one and despite its social significance cannot be solved until the cost of good housing can be reduced to a level within reach of more of the population." Failing that reduction, or failing a radical change in the economic structure of the nation, it is clear that family incomes must be brought up to the place where they can purchase decent living accommodations. No one—private or public houser—disputes this. The question correctly stated is: How shall we use tax funds to supplement family incomes for rental purposes? How shall the gap be closed between what good housing costs, even when profits are removed from the picture, and what people can pay?

Beyond this there is still another question inherent in the past experience of welfare agencies. The relief family's budget

ordinarily allows a maximum of 25% for shelter. Pitifully insufficient, and far below commercial rents for good properties, the most of the rental money thus provided has gone straight into the pockets of rent racketeers, and hence into the preservation of the slums. How can taxpayers assure themselves that their hard-earned dollars, willingly paid for the worthy purpose of helping less successful members of the community, shall not be the means of subsidizing slum owners?

Public Housing Offers Solutions

Immediately after World War I most of the European countries tackled the problem of their "sick" cities in dead earnest. Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, and England made outstanding efforts. So rapidly did England progress, for instance, that at the outbreak of World War II 15% of her population was living in homes financed in part by the Government, though built and operated by local authorities. The work of the intervening years had been carried on through successive changes of political leadership, and had commanded the continuous support of liberals and conservatives alike. Indeed, when the conservatives came into power at the beginning of the last decade, they not only preserved the housing programs inherited by them, but actually made remarkable advances. That the principle and practice of public housing in England have come to stay is a matter of accepted fact. It is the cornerstone of her post-war construction program.

What Public Housing Did for America

In the United States the sentiment for Government intervention crystallized much more slowly. Finally, by an act of the Congress in 1934, a local housing authority was created in the District of Columbia. Known as the Alley Dwelling Authority, its early experiences provided much of the impetus behind the establishment, in 1937, of the United States Housing Authority. This new federal agency was given broad powers of coopera-

BEFORE . . .



The above picture shows a portion of St. Mary's Court in Washington, D.C. before the National Capital Housing Authority moved in to provide the decent and sanitary dwellings pictured below.

AFTER . . .



tion with municipal and other groups who would organize themselves into "housing authorities," having as their principal aims the rehousing of low income families and the elimination of slum dwellings.

The response across the nation was immediate. Within a few years 600 such authorities, urban and rural, had been created, and were beginning to make significant inroads on their ancient and disreputable housing. Furthermore, by 1942 a total of half a million American citizens were living in new and wholesome settings. The contribution on the part of the local governments was approximately 20%, usually in the form of tax exemption of the developments; the Federal Government provided lump sums in order to reduce the rents, and customarily administered them on the basis of a sliding scale which made it possible to adjust rents to incomes.

The five-year experiment—prior to our entry into the war—in permanent building cost \$750 million dollars, but the gains were clear. The nation had discovered a practicable way of destroying its housing eyesores, at the same time bringing fresh hope and comfort to the long imprisoned slum dwellers. Of the low-rent homes built through 1942, 92% were occupied by families with annual incomes under \$1200.00. Private enterprise, to make the contrast, built in the same year only 1.2% of its new housing for the same income group.

The Alley Dwelling Authority—now known as the National Capital Housing Authority—was given in its initial legislation the principal objective of slum reclamation. It was to do away with Washington's infamous inhabited alleys, and to dispose of them, when cleared, to the Government for public uses or to private enterprise for uses consistent with the location and value of the sites. When sites were suitable for the erection of dwellings, it was to plan, build, and manage them for the occupancy of low income families.

The Success of the National Capital Housing Authority

The original thought was to give the Authority a revolving fund of three million dollars, to which subsequently should be added another nine million dollars. For several reasons this was not done. Instead, the total amount received by the agency in the next four years—under Title I, the first legislation—was \$865,000. Although the Authority was entitled to treat this as expendable capital, its decision was to regard the amount as a loan, capable of bearing 3% interest.

With this small amount 14 slum areas were reclaimed, and upon some of the sites 112 dwellings were erected. These dwellings, still managed by the Authority, are rented at levels which carry the full cost of site acquisition, construction, debt service, management, and real estate taxes. They omit only the owner's profits. An important point is that the top rent—including heat, hot and cold water, and janitor service—is \$37.50. Considering that the average dwelling unit rental in Washington in 1940 was considerably above \$50.00, the success is clearly evident.

Death Blow to a Proved Method

In 1942, however, a hostile Senate subcommittee, headed by Senator McKellar, put an end to the 'revolving fund' concept. The Committee ordered that all unexpended balances be paid into the federal treasury, and that any earnings of the Authority, including its rent-roll, be likewise surrendered. An amount entirely inadequate to the upkeep of the properties under management—\$12,000—was to be annually appropriated. This meant not only the eventual decline of the value of the properties, but also the inability of the Authority to function longer in the field of slum reclamation. Briefly put, it was the death blow to a proved method.

Public Housing That Cost Taxpayer Nothing

When on June 30, 1942, the Authority took stock of its operations under Title I, it found that its assets were slightly in

excess of \$831,000. Its accumulated operating deficit was \$9,361, while its net earnings for the past year had been \$22,000. Obviously the Authority was well on the way to returning every last cent to the taxpayers.

In the desire to secure restoration of its revenues and to obtain additional appropriations, the Authority requested a congressional investigation of its work. Senator Harold K. Burton, long and deeply interested in the problem of the slums, accepted chairmanship of the subcommittee set up for this purpose, and the first hearing was held on October 5, 1943. The next was not to be held until January 24, 1944, and in the meantime a great deal was to happen.

Private Enterprise Moves In

Meeting in Cleveland on November 19, 1943, the National Association of Real Estate Boards drew up a statement of policy. Article Number Two of that policy was a wholesale condemnation of the theory and practice of public housing. "The public housing experiment has proven a mistake. It has failed to relieve those in greatest need. It has utterly failed in its first objective, namely, the clearance of slum areas. The public housing movement as currently constituted is a social and public menace and has already become a vested interest of tenants and political job-holders. . . . The housing now owned by local or Federal Governments should be disposed of to private enterprise. There should be no further subsidies for public housing construction or public housing projects. Realtors and property owners should unite in opposing further use of public funds for this questionable enterprise."

Public Asked to Subsidize Profit Rents

Having made this demand for a three-quarter billion dollar grab, the Association calmly entered its second claim on the taxpayers in Article Number Three. "Public assistance should be given directly to families that cannot pay economic rents.

This assistance should be administered through local welfare boards in the form of rent certificates adjusted to the needs and requirements of the family. . . . This is the straightforward American way of handling the problem." In other words, the public was asked to subsidize *profit* rents, said profits to go to the numerically insignificant portion of the population engaged, or desirous of being engaged, in the investment management of low-rental properties.

Article Number Four contained a hidden demand that the right of eminent domain be exercised at the behest of private entrepreneurs, and also a provincial bit of reasoning in the matter of taxation. "Slums and blighted areas should be rebuilt by private enterprise. To assist private enterprise in this task, cities should have broad powers of eminent domain permitting them to reassemble the land to be rebuilt in accordance with an approved city plan. Where cities need Federal credit to carry out this undertaking, it should be made available. . . . Citizens of our urban communities are providing 90% of the revenues of the Federal Government; therefore, they should be permitted to use the federal credit (which is their own) in such rebuilding programs. . . ."

Real Estate Interests Attack

These brief paragraphs outlined the strategy of attack. It was not long in coming. On December 4, 1943, the Housing and Rent Control Committee of the Federation of Citizens Associations of the District of Columbia issued a report of its "study" of slum reclamation and low rent housing. Among the recommendations was to be found: "Before any basic plan looking forward to an ideal solution of post-war housing problems can be instituted, it is necessary to sweep away the dust and cobwebs of past error so that the real results can be more readily appraised and the basic plan fitted to a solid foundation. To this end the present National Capital Housing Authority should be liquidated and its functions and assets transferred to appropriate agencies." This Committee also recommended the use of

rent certificates, as well as other familiar aids to private enterprise.

Oddly enough, the local Home Builders Association found itself enthusiastically in agreement with these recommendations. There were some Washingtonians, however, who kept in mind the last sentence of Article Number Three of the policy promulgated by the National Association of Real Estate Boards, and wondered. "*Realtors and property owners should unite in opposing further use of public funds for this questionable enterprise.*"

What the Critics Said

The testimony before Senator Burton, to say nothing of that offered before another committee of the House, is hopelessly long and involved. If ever there was a need to apply Occam's razor, it is certainly to the five volumes of the Senate proceedings already printed. But some of the essential arguments offered by private builders, agents of financial institutions and their sympathizers, may be summarized, together with the rejoinders, as follows:

Who Builds Public Housing?

1. *Private Enterprise:* During the war emergency, private builders have concentrated their efforts on supplying the middle-income market, "and there will be no substantial need for some years to come for any large amount of housing accommodations for these people." The private builders will have to work in the low-income field "or there will be little building done by private enterprise."

Response: Private builders, after competitive bidding, have done all the building planned by local authorities. The Government relies upon private industry to do the job. It will continue to do so. Likewise, private money can purchase the Government

bonds which provide working capital for new developments. The squeeze is put only on speculative money and upon those who wish to undertake investment management in the low-income field—relying upon the taxpayers to guarantee their, and their children's, profits.

Furthermore, the statement that the middle income group has all the housing it needs for a while is a suspect claim, to say the least. The Housing Committee of the 20th Century Fund is representative of most disinterested research bodies in declaring: "No strain is required to build up an estimate of potential new housing demand amounting to 1,300,000, or even more, nonfarm units a year during the first decade after the war. There would, in addition, be a heavy demand for farm housing, repairs, and alterations." Only the speculative home builders, it appears, seem gloomy about the prospects.

Is It Bad That Some Privately Owned Houses Be Vacated?

2. *Private Enterprise:* "Public housing will draw tenants from privately owned housing and create a post-war vacancy."

Response: It is profoundly to be hoped that something will happen to create vacancies in much privately owned housing. A fourth of it in 1940 was already unfit for human habitation, or in need of major repairs, and the inability to make repairs during the war has sped hundreds of thousands of houses to join this back-log of obsolescence. We want to get people out of the slums, not to keep them there. If owners of substandard property suffer, that is unfortunate. But, as Walter Rauschenbusch said of the Old Testament Law: "The manhood of the poor was more sacred to it than the property of the rich." A scarcity market has kept some Washington slum properties in constant use for two generations after their official condemnation. They will be occupied until they collapse unless their owners have to face the competition of abundant, well-planned housing, renting for equivalent amounts.

Does Private Enterprise Housing Cost Less?

3. *Private Enterprise*: "Private enterprise can build housing of the type called for in slum clearance for from 27% to 35% less than public housing costs; and can manage housing more economically after completion."

Response: Perhaps private enterprise is right, in terms of dollars and cents, but it is impossible to know at this point because its representatives have persistently refused to submit the kind of data that would make for conclusive analysis and proof. The figures of the public authority, on the contrary, have been at all times available.

Such figures as were offered by the critics of public housing were seriously open to question as to whether the properties from which they were drawn were comparable to the public properties with which they were presumably being compared. After all, the costs of materials, professional services, installation of utilities, and so on, are approximately the same for each builder, providing that quality is the same.

There is one thing clear, however. Public housing paid more for its labor. The A-wage scale was required in the contracts by action of the Department of Labor, and the various classes of workmen were remunerated according to this scale. Private enterprisers argued that while they paid lower wages, they kept their building staffs busy the year round and the annual wage was therefore greater. It is worth noting that the labor unions remained unimpressed. The fact is that labor stands solidly for public housing operations, and its leaders express themselves definitely on this point: low wages make it necessary for the laborer's family to live in substandard conditions. This goes for management and maintenance staffs as well as for construction workers.

On the subject of management, private enterprise's argument is likewise open to serious question. Private management claimed it did the job for 5% of the rentals, while public managers were alleged to have squandered 13% of their rentals

on the same services. Allowing a legitimate score for private operation in terms of immediate economy, it must defend itself against the following charge: The kind of attention such low expenditure gives a property is exactly the kind that creates slums, especially when properties have been poorly built to begin with. Repairs are not made in time, internal and external equipment is allowed to deteriorate, and the costs of current upkeep are passed along to the final owner, who, caring hardly anything for the appearance of his building and less for the people who live in it, likewise does little or nothing.

But the crucial question in the cost argument is this: If private enterprise has built similar accommodations at so much lower figures than public, why do the rents remain jacked up? Lower costs—and particularly when private builders and investment managers are as socially minded as they now represent themselves to be—ought to mean lower rents. If they wanted to prove their new-born interest in rehousing low-income people, they could make a distinguished beginning by slashing the rents on their garden-city type of developments by one-third to one-half. At the time of this writing no such step had been taken.

Do Private Enterprisers Want Low Income People Rehoused?

4. *Private Enterprise*: "The public will have to pay the difference between the cost of land and slum buildings and the actual new use value of the cleared ground."

Response: One of the builders demonstrated what this meant. Taking a slum site in point, he proceeded to show what kind of plans he would execute for its rehabilitation. Then he got down to brass tacks. It would cost the taxpayers about \$3300 for each of the dwelling unit sites. This would be the site write-down necessary if he was to go to work. On his part he would put up a quarter as much as the taxpayers for each site, but he wished it to be understood that the new title would be in his

name. The only recompense for this generous public contribution to his private estate he could think of was the fact that he would expect to pay real estate taxes in the future!

What he didn't go into as carefully as he might have was a discussion of rentals and how low-income families could afford them. The lowest rental he proposed—\$42.50 for a *double* bedroom apartment—is far and away above the income level of most of the families he would be expected to rehouse. For three- and four-bedroom units, the rentals would go up correspondingly. These are the kinds of units needed for real families, but with more children the same low income has less in it for rental outlay. The solution proposed, naturally, was that the public would issue rent certificates to cover any embarrassing hiatus between the occupant's income and the commercial rent.

This is rather typical of the sort of scheming in which large numbers of real estate operators seem to have been indulging. Even the small apartments described, as in this instance, could not be utilized unless staggering sums were appropriated to the welfare departments. When it comes to telling the public what the estimate of an annual rent relief budget would be, private enterprise has been silent.

One of two things is possible: either private housers does not wish the public to gain an inkling of the tremendous subsidies they are asking for or else they do not hold their own rent certificate plan with serious intent. In which case, is it not fair to ask—since they seek relentlessly the death of the only alternative, public housing—whether they really *want* to see low-income families decently rehoused?

Does Subsidized Housing Lead to Socialist State?

5. *Private enterprise*: "We are fearful that if subsidized housing is accepted in this country, that subsidized medicine, subsidized food production, and eventually completely subsidized industry will follow, destroying our unique American

system of private enterprise, and gradually changing us into a socialistic state."

Response: This is a standard charge against housing reform, or against any other social reform. The business of shifting attention from the facts in the case is readily accomplished by dragging the socialistic herring across the trail. But it becomes less and less easy. In point of fact, it negatively influences intelligent people who have seen the technique used time and again.

One of the surest means of preserving our form of government is to correct the legitimate grievances which have found place under it. The folk who sing the "bitter ballad of the slums" have the most legitimate grievance in the world—the negating of their right, and the right of their children, to live and prosper in morally and physically healthful surroundings. When, as in the case of Washington now, there is not a single dwelling unit available for moderate rental to Negro families, there is every danger of public unrest.

Furthermore, do private enterprisers still think that governmental operation of the postal system is a bad thing? or inefficient? Do they complain about their states building and owning the highways, instead of the toll road operators of other years? How about the public schools? Each one of these advances was, in its time, fought tooth and toe-nail on the grounds that it endangered our way of life. But private enterprisers cannot even take a drink of water in most cities now—good, pure, inexpensive water—without gratitude for government intervention.

The Danger of Low-Rent Barons

To hand over huge slum tracts to private enterprise for redevelopment and management would mean in the course of time that a few individuals would become low-rent barons.

Said John Calvin in the *Institutes*, "The vice and imperfections of men renders it safer and more tolerable for the Government to be in the hands of many, that they may afford each other mutual assistance and admonition, and that if any arrogate to himself more than is right, the many may act as censors and masters to restrain his ambition." Most of us will agree with Calvin. We would rather have the tremendous property powers represented in redeveloped slums in the hands of the many than in the hands of the few. It seems more congenial to our form of government.

However this may be, it remains that honest discussion of basic facts and plans with respect to them are democratic ways of hammering out solutions. He who screams "socialism" declares that his point of view has little, if any, of the truth in it.

The Bill Is Introduced

An investigative hearing is one thing. Everybody talks, sometimes to the point and sometimes not. But when legislation is drafted and introduced, the discussion is inevitably shaken down into its particulars.

On May 17 Washington at last had a chance to see what private enterprise was really after. S. 1923 and H.R. 4819 spelled out their objectives.

The legislation called for the creation of a Slum Clearance Agency with a seven-man board, which could easily be dominated by the real estate interests. The Board could condemn and acquire slum and blighted property, and dispose of it as it saw fit. Sales to private redevelopers—the public Authority, of course, would be eliminated from consideration—might be "by means of competitive bidding, or after public hearing, or both, in the discretion of the Agency." The Agency could likewise determine out of its own wisdom what new uses the land should be put to. The part to be played by the established and effective National Capital Parks and Planning Commission was strangely

omitted. As to rents, the Agency could order maximum rentals for periods of time it thought useful, but would give them "periodic" reconsideration. Our old friend—rent relief—was gingerly included; so gingerly, in fact, that it was difficult to suppose a serious well-informed attorney had drawn up the paragraph.

"Millionaire's Dole"

Usually soft spoken, General U. S. Grant, 3rd, Chairman of the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, took a couple of good looks at the bill's contents and hit the roof. "I feel that this Bill is in its potentialities, the most dangerous piece of legislation I have known of being introduced with reference to the District of Columbia in my 43 years' connection with it; and I am convinced that the Citizen's Associations and the Board of Trade would never have endorsed it if they had realized what harm can be done to them, to their property, and to the District of Columbia as a whole if this Bill is enacted." Sharply he termed it a "pork barrel Bill," and then castigated its "star chamber" provisions. The Agency could, he said, obligate taxpayers to guarantee the profits and financing costs of a few fortunate developers, and there would be little the taxpayers could do about it. Another critic, less formal in his language, slightly referred to the scheme embodied in the bill as the "millionaire's dole."

The newspapers, as startled as General Grant, roundly thumped the measure. Said Washington's conservative *Star*: "Proponents of the measure argue that much of this outlay would be returned, through the sale of property to private re-developers and through the tax yield of the reclaimed areas. They say there might even be a profit. That is an interesting theory." What scared the *Star* was the prospect of losing Federal help in getting rid of the slums, and of making local taxpayers foot the entire bill. It would scare editors in other cities, too.

The *Post* was blunter about it:

We agree with General Grant . . . that this is one of the worst pieces of District legislation introduced in Congress in recent years. . . . It is almost devoid of safeguards to insure use of the immense powers it would convey in the public interest. . . . The section of the bill authorizing assistance to persons needing low rentals is incomprehensible to us in its present form. If it means that the Board of Public Welfare would be called upon to pay the rent of families living in privately owned houses whenever the tenants themselves could not meet their obligations, it will bear the closest sort of scrutiny. The whole subject of subsidies to private enterprise in the redevelopment of slum areas needs to be brought out into the open for much fuller discussion than it has been given to date.

After the Election

At the moment both sides are enjoying a pre-election truce. Private enterprise has seen to it that a housing plank has been written into the platform of one of the major parties. In light of the Washington experience, the registered voters of the party may wish to make enquiry as to exactly what the plank means. The foregoing should provide material for some interesting questions.

But in any event the fighting will resume immediately after the elections when the Congress reconvenes. It is likely that private enterprise will introduce a modification of the above bill, which seems to have died an unlamented death, but many of the original features will doubtless remain—two particularly, the liquidation of public housing and the demand for a rent relief plan.

No Time For Dallying

The riddance of slums and the rehousing of poorer people is not a problem this country can afford to dally over. The shacks and the tenements and the basements are prodigal wasters of human life. Our national security, to overlook dictates of ordinary human decency, depends upon wiping them out of existence and replacing them with real homes.

To allow the one method now demonstrated here and abroad

—public housing—to be discarded because a few people in a huge industry want an exorbitant profit is unthinkable stupidity. Public housing is more than a “middle axiom,” the middle road between capitalism and socialism; it is one of the things essential to the preservation of capitalism itself. It removes from the record ugly failures that at present make talking points for those who don’t like the way we do things.

Let Private Enterprise Match Strides With Public Housing

If private enterprise—which hardly at this point seems either private or enterprise—wishes to offer proof of its willingness to get into the low-rental field and to stay there, let it attempt to match strides with public housing under identical trial conditions. The National Capital Housing Authority, at the request of Senator Burton, worked out a formula by which private enterprise should have, at each new opportunity, a first chance to do the job in accordance with the rigid requirements the public authority had set for itself. That formula was offered and instantaneously rejected. It would appear from this summary action that private enterprise cordially disliked the notion of a public pace-setter. But it is entitled to no benefits of public powers, to no capital grants, and to no rental subsidies, until its builders can prove that they mean business. This proof will come not in talking, but in building.

The Fight Will Come Your Way

In the meantime, private real estate men will not starve. They have two-thirds of the housing market all their own, and they can have much more than that if they will voluntarily cut their profits. Public housing builds only for that part of the consuming public which cannot afford to purchase or to rent good housing on the commercial market, and that is all it should continue to do.

Sooner or later the fight will come your way. When it does, be ready for it. It is the worthwhile fight of the many against the few to build a decent America by guaranteeing America’s families a decent place to live.

WHO CHANGES CLEVELAND?



A Program of "Discussion Unlimited" Begun by a Minister, the Churches' "Vision of a City Redeemed," a Post-War Planning Council, and the Balance of Conflicting and Well Organized Groups Provide an Answer to "Who Changes Cleveland?" in the following article by Kenneth Underwood.

A city is like a person. It has a personality, a mood and a name. It has a way of doing things and of avoiding things it doesn't want to do. It is moral or immoral. Farsighted or confused. Hard working or lazy. It meets a crisis such as war and becomes panicky. Or by it is stirred to greater action.

City with Moral Resources

As nearly as one can categorize the morals of a city, Cleveland's morals are positive, farsighted, good. It has steered itself through this war without race riots, without serious labor-management conflict, and without tragic exploitation of newcomers. And now it prepares for peace with unusual assurance, coordination and purposiveness.

Cleveland has not been blessed with easy or few problems to solve. It is the nation's sixth largest city with a population in July 1944 of 1,257,000. During the last twenty years its Negro population has grown from 34,000 to 95,000 and there have been many who have resented the influx. The majority of its population is of first or second generation European stock—Croatian, Slavic, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Rumanian, Russian, Irish and Italian. These groups are far from integrated; they compete vigorously for jobs and housing.

To meet all these problems Cleveland has constantly adapted itself, and changed its institutions in order to meet more adequately the needs of its people. Where does this dynamic for social change come from in Cleveland? How does a city learn to direct its energy toward the common good? I went to Cleveland to find out.

The Vision of a City Redeemed

There are many factors of social change in Cleveland. We could begin with the city's social idealism. It is present in the statements of church, civic, business and labor leaders. Ministers such as Dr. D. R. Sharpe, director of the Cleveland Baptist Association, hold before the people "the vision of a city redeemed." The League for Human Rights, a liberal group fighting native fascism, speaks for "the vision of a democratic city."

City planners such as S. Burns Weston, director of the Post War Planning Council of Greater Cleveland, talk of "using the best intelligence of the community to free us from unemployment, blighted areas, and racial conflict."

This stream of social idealism stems from the time of Tom L. Johnson, Cleveland's liberal mayor from 1901 to 1911. Johnson, as a local poet put it, went "beyond his party and beyond his class"; he "forsook the few to serve the mass." The tradition of Tom Johnson lives on in Cleveland's present mayor and Ohio's Governor-elect, Frank J. Lausche. Negroes point out that he grew up in the slums, that he continues to live on the edge of the colored district, and that his office is always open to everyone. Much of the initiative for social change has come from his Committee on Democratic Practices and his Post War Planning Council.

Carefully Balanced Organized Power

Cleveland's social and economic structure also makes for constant adaptation to the needs of its people. For Cleveland is a highly organized city of at least 1600 active groups. These associations represent a balance of many interests, and a spirit of give and take which has grown in part out of the necessity for continual compromise. For only by compromise could decisions be made in a city so carefully balanced in organized power.

No one family, or industry, or clique dominates the political or economic life of Cleveland. Its economic life is geared to no principal industry as in Detroit. It has 210 different types and 68 classes of industries. Because of this its industrial and business leaders represent a spectrum of social views—"left wing, middle, and back in the dark ages." The power of management is checked by local labor organizations with 200,000 union members. The population, as already noted, is varied and balanced. No one national group dominates the personality of the city. The people are represented by foreign-language newspapers whose editors are brought into all important community organizations and hence reflect in their papers the interests of the entire city more often than that of a minority group alone.

Coordination of Social Forces

Cleveland is strong for co-ordination of all its social forces. The acme of this principle is represented in the Post War Planning Council of Greater Cleveland. The Council is a voluntary organization which systematizes the planning activities of more than a hundred of the top public and private planning agencies in the city. As the *Cleveland News* says, "the city does not intend to be caught after the war with its plans down."

The Council is composed of one hundred and fifty community experts representing a cross-section of business, labor, religious, racial and civic leaders. The Council's reports have been such a fair averaging out of conflicting interests that no group has objected.

The Council breaks up into panels on labor-management relations, public works, transportation, public finance and taxation, interracial relations and the like. All sessions are open to the press and the public. Each pressure group

A PROGRAM OF SELF-EXAMINATION

A community program of self-examination and self-condemnation was begun recently in San Jose, California to prepare the city for peace in the midst of war.

Ten committees (each specializing in one area) get the facts on the efficiency with which the city is meeting the basic functions of education, government, social welfare, health, recreation, housing, industry and labor, and religion. These committees report to a Citizens Planning Council of 30 people who represent the principal organizations, races and creeds of the city. The Council evaluates the work now being done by the community, pictures improvements that could be made in the future, recommends a time schedule and plan for getting them done, and uses all the community's educational facilities for selling the program to San Jose citizens.

A few of the churches are surveying realistically their own work, not in terms of traditional practices but of meeting deep, persistent human needs. The entire membership of the churches works on some phase of the study so that a new sense of the variety of human needs is created.

There is a new confidence in San Jose as citizens realize that intelligent, long range plans are being made for the future. The services of the city health officers are to be enlarged, compulsory milk pasteurization ordinances have been enacted. All the community's facilities are being used for recreation, and "Neighborhood Councils" are meeting to improve housing of minority groups. San Jose citizens have discovered that the Lord helps those who help each other.

—Stephen C. Peabody

has been free to question the selection of the Council's staff and panel members. For example, both labor unions and industrial groups conducted an extensive investigation of S. Burns Weston before both agreed to him as director of the Council.

The success of such planning depends on an informed and active public opinion which intends to see that the various organizations in Cleveland alter their own interests and programs in realization of the compromise plan of the Council. The Council's work would mean little were not hundreds of similar meetings where conflicting views are exchanged on public policy now being held over the city.

"Discussion Unlimited"

Americans have always held that the best way of achieving an informed democracy is to thrash out conflicting ideas face-to-face in small group discussions or "town meetings." But in a great city, the ideal of the New England Town Meeting has been difficult to achieve.

Cleveland is the first city in America to organize well-planned discussion groups on a city-wide, voluntary basis. During the past two years Cleveland has held over two thousand "Town Meetings of Greater Cleveland." These forums, panels, or discussions have been held in civic centers, public halls, labor locals, club rooms, homes, libraries, churches and schools. People from every class, creed and race have met together to face specific civic, national, and world problems. They have studied non-partisan outlines prepared "by the best intelligence in the city," read tons of recommended books and pamphlets to spike rumors and expose false propaganda, expressed their opinions freely, and listened to hundreds of Cleveland's leaders and information experts.

I attended one of these town meetings at the Euclid Immanuel Baptist Church. Thirty people had come to figure out the kind of peace they wanted. They met in a church parlor which had a twenty-four starred service flag hung across the front wall.

"I have been sitting here looking at those service stars," the discussion leader began. "And it occurred to me that in spite of all our service men's lounges, information booths, newsletters and parades, we civilians are neglecting the one thing our soldiers really want. And that is the disposition on the part of Cleveland people to build a world free from war. You who came here have the desire to build such a world. You are not sure how best to use your influence in your business, school, union, and at the polls for that peace. So you have come ready to hear what others have to say and to give your own views."

As that man spoke men and women in more than a hundred town meetings over Cleveland began their discussion in a similar mood of serious endeavor to find a way to peace in the world and in Cleveland.

Development of "Town Meetings"

The "Town Meetings of Greater Cleveland" were begun two years ago by Charles F. MacLennan, a Presbyterian minister. MacLennan had no money for the project, but he believed that Cleveland people would give time and financial support to a community-wide discussion of the issues of a people's peace and of Cleveland's post war problems.

Six months after Mr. MacLennan had asked for volunteer workers he had 200 of the city's leaders giving speeches, 115 people arranging the meetings through existing organizations, 200 were spending their evenings telephoning people about the meetings, 57 were organizing and scheduling discussions, 40 were enlisting discussion leaders, 140 were taking the leadership training course at Cleveland College, and 80 secretaries, typists, file clerks and shop workers were giving several hours each week to do the Town Meetings' office work.

The workers do not try to hold mass meetings. Nor do they attempt "neighborhood meetings" in areas where there is little or no community spirit. Their concern is to get the groups all ready in Cleveland to organize Town Meetings to discuss topics and study guides prepared by the city's experts. In one year

they had 325 different groups participating and 1600 organizations receiving discussion material.

In a special training program, discussion leaders learned how to introduce topics, how to be fair to an audience, and how to encourage questions. Guides to discussion were prepared for the people attending the meetings. "Your ideas count. . . . Say what you think. . . . Dig for points that matter. . . . If you don't understand where the discussion is going say so."

While discussion leaders were being trained, study commissions were selecting topics and preparing discussion guides. Town Meeting audiences never went unprepared. Subjects were defined, problems described, and possible solutions outlined. The first Town Meeting discussion series focused for two months on seven topics: Economic Cooperation Among Nations, Racial and Minority Problems, Future of Democracy, United Nations in United Action, World Organization, Preparing for Peace in Time of War, and Cleveland Plans for Jobs and Better Neighborhoods.

Guides for each of these topics were prepared by a separate panel of fifteen men and women. Three people—if possible a left winger, a middle of the roader, and a conservative—were selected from each of five groups: business, labor, religious, civic, and professional. Never before in Cleveland's history had groups met like this to work on mutual problems. The resulting outlines were fair and inclusive.

After each panel meeting and discussion, the people drew up summary reports so they would see where they agreed and disagreed. MacLennan and I looked at a stack of several hundred of these reports one night in the Town Meeting office.

"At least ten thousand people sweated over those, trying to find points where they agreed. People from several hundred organizations that propagandize their interests came together to try to arrive at a socially constructive statement on which all would agree. There you have the shortest road in America to action in the interests of the whole community," MacLennan said a little reverently.

Many people came to the October discussions on race relations in a boiling mood. That month had been full of trouble in Cleveland's plants over upgrading and hiring of Negroes. The colored population had been increased again by a new influx of workers and Negroes were pushing into new areas to find housing. Feeling ran high, then visibly levelled off as more than ten thousand people in one evening tried to come to agreement in Town Meetings on: "What civil rights are accorded minority groups? What are the inequalities in housing, education, medical and social service? Has race prejudice retarded progress? What are the alternative solutions? How can religion help?"

Town Meeting workers have big plans for the coming months. They believe their program can help returning soldiers discover the meaning of democracy again through the deep experience of free and open discussion. Such meetings they say are "democracy in action." They are "the safety valve of democracy." They plan a series on the problems of the returned serviceman, giving him an opportunity to speak his mind. They are preparing a discussion guide on local pressure groups, their activities in Cleveland and how they can be controlled.

MacLennan believes that our ability to adjust postwar problems, to care for returned veterans, to prevent World War III may depend in part upon our ability to organize town by town and city by city a program of "discussion unlimited" as developed in the "Town Meetings of Greater Cleveland."

The Influence of the Churches

Among the primary forces for social redemption in Cleveland have been the Protestant Churches. Their influence was increased considerably by the formation of the Cleveland Federation of Churches in 1910. The idea behind the Federation was to "organize Protestantism so it could be heard in the chambers of city government, business and labor, with a strong and united voice."

The churches have attempted to mediate their Christian

principles through most of the organized groups in Cleveland. The National Association of Manufacturers' industry and church meetings now have about seventy in attendance. The ministers have made it clear that they are interested in improving the economic welfare of all and not in the defense of a particular position or interest.

Work With Organized Groups

In no city in America do church leaders have a better acquaintance with organized labor. This has been due largely to the work of the local Religion and Labor Foundation. Some ministers have gone on picket lines with workers carrying signs: "Apply your religion. Do not pass through these picket lines."

To all groups the ministers have said (in the words of Dr. Sharpe) "The Church must stand above every party and social group and support the right wherever it is."

Over four hundred Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religious leaders have united in Cleveland for social reform through the Church Civic League. The influence of this group on municipal elections has been tremendous. Candidates are invited to the League's meeting to make speeches and are asked questions on specific and crucial local issues. After the group has heard the candidates, it goes on record for the men it believes most qualified. The League then publicizes extensively its reasons for selecting certain candidates.

Recently church women canvassed the city to secure a new school board which would give Negro representation and break the control of a real estate group. While I was in Cleveland a special committee of the Church Federation aroused enough public pressure to force the resignation of the superintendent of the Cleveland State Hospital for the insane, who was alleged to have resisted efforts to end the inadequate and incompetent care given patients.

Cleveland was one of five cities which established during the war a full time director of Protestant Social Welfare, to

COMMUNITY STRATEGISTS FOR CHURCHES

The creation in City Councils of Churches of departments of Christian Social Relations with trained "community strategists" has been accelerated by wartime emergencies, according to a survey by the Rev. Bruce Whittemore, pastor of the West Side Hill Methodist Church, Waterbury, Conn.

Church Councils of Detroit, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Chicago, Washington, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Toledo and Dayton have employed full-time, professional social scientists to direct their programs of action and education. Three additional councils are in the process of organizing departments of social relations, according to Mr. Whittemore.

These Directors (1) serve as an information bureau and liaison office between the various churches and welfare agencies of the city; (2) coordinate Protestant welfare services for the sake of efficiency; (3) represent Protestant interests in community-wide activities; (4) direct campaigns of Christian social

education and develop strategy for social action programs; (5) supervise and promote the social services which the churches provide cooperatively.

The experience of the above ten departments indicates that the traditional inefficiency of churches in social, economic and political matters can be overcome, and that the Protestant church can be heard with a united voice in the various organizations and commissions of the city. For example, in Dayton the Protestant churches' Social Relations Department has become the leading force in city-wide programs to meet wartime housing shortages, racial discrimination and other social dislocations.

According to Mr. Whittemore many chief executives of city councils are saying, "Social action committees are all very nice, but they don't do much. Our next addition to the staff will be a trained strategist to direct our total social relations program."

co-ordinate the forces of all the churches and to train church workers for professional social work. This department began after church women volunteered their services to a juvenile court judge. The judge told them he wanted "no amateurs meddling," but that he would welcome Protestant help if professionally done. A trained director, Mrs. P. F. Hawkins, was provided. The judge also asked for more community resources which young people could use. So several churches in a year doubled their leisure time groups and educational programs, reaching out to "people who had made mistakes as well as the holy." Six day child-care centers and two experimental church programs for young people were launched, and corrective institutions for girls were re-equipped by the churches.

Meeting the Needs of Negro Churches

Protestant work on Cleveland's race problems is a test of the church's social sincerity and strategy. Twenty years ago H. Paul Douglass surveyed the needs of the city's Negro churches. He recommended (1) improved leadership and (2) better equipment. Denominational representatives began visiting seminaries and recruiting a highly educated Negro ministry. There are now as many Negro ministers as white ministers dangling Phi Beta Kappa keys. The new ministers kicked out the old time politicians who whooped up their candidacy in Cleveland's colored churches. They taught the Negroes to study and vote on the record of politicians. The denominational boards secured through the city's banks the same loan terms for Negro as for white churches.

Next a program to break down segregation within the churches was initiated. Interracial camps and fellowships were formed. According to Dr. Sharpe, only two or three Baptist churches in the city will not accept Negro members. Many "white" churches in the city have several Negro families in attendance. (The most interracial religious group in Cleveland, however, is the Mohammedan church.) Many church leaders of both races tell the Negroes to "knock at the door of white churches and do not go away until admitted. This is one of the best ways you can witness for Christ."

Having put its own house partly in order, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance now seeks social justice for the Negro on fourteen fronts—civic, law enforcement, education, industry and employment, health, housing, evangelism, thrift and saving, recreation, interracial fellowships, etc. The action on each front is directed by a committee of influential laymen and clergymen. These committees unite on specific issues with organizations such as the Urban League, Future Outlook League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Such a united stand of churches helped to give the Negro a more just share of the city's public housing areas and opened

three thousand new jobs formerly employing white men only.

Some of the churches' chief educational work was done through the foreign-language press, since much of the racial tension developed between minority national groups and the Negroes. The editors of the foreign language newspapers cooperated with church and civic leaders in distributing stories about Kid Chocolate, Dorie Miller, Joe Louis and other Negro heroes. Negro churchmen helped in organizing a conference of Negro business and white industrialists to pave the way for less discrimination in factories. Churchmen arbitrated work stoppage disputes over failure to upgrade or hire Negroes in stores, telephone offices, and a milk distributing company.

Negro churches have educated their people to duties as well as rights. The Negro Ministerial Association hits hard in pulpit and press on the dangers of "going high hat" because of better jobs. It issues bulletins called "No Recession" advocating that homes be bought now, and church thrift clubs be joined. The clubs were organized through missionary societies to aid in family budgeting. Two hundred thousand dollars in mortgages on Negro churches were liquidated in 1943 and the first six months of 1944. A request for \$17,000 from Negroes for a new Y.M.C.A. building was topped by a gift of \$23,000. With such a response, the Y.M.C.A. in its Centennial drive asked for \$25,000 and was given \$28,500 by the Negroes. All of which dispels the myth that Negroes do not know how to use increased incomes when given them.

The wartime release from debt gives the Negro churches a new freedom. Mortgages have been a method of control over Negro churches, according to the Rev. W. H. McKinney, Negro minister of the Antioch Baptist Church and president of the "Cleveland Ministerial Association" (white and colored). McKinney speaks with some knowledge of mortgage-control for during his defense of picketing against a company for discrimination, company officials attempted to bring similar economic pressure on his own church.

Cleveland churches did much to prevent race riots. After the

Detroit riot Mayor Lausche gave Mr. McKinney and the director of the Future Outlook League, Mr. John Holly, a letter of introduction to Mayor Jeffries in Detroit. Their instructions were to find how Cleveland could avoid a similar riot. Three hundred and sixty-five ministers came to hear McKinney's report. They came because they were scared, as were the other leaders of Cleveland. McKinney said, "In Detroit before the riot, no one could get the ministers to say anything. That must not happen here." It didn't. The ministers got busy and made hundreds of talks before city groups. They published hand bills and news stories. A committee of liberal ministers went with other civic leaders into the factories wherever they saw trouble brewing, thrashed out grievances. White and colored workers saw that their leaders were on hand to work out difficulties through mediation rather than riots.

McKinney also found that the Detroit riot was most severe in highly segregated areas, where people of different races were not accustomed to one another. So the churches expanded their interracial camps and fellowships. A Citizens Committee of both races was formed and given large insignia for public identification. Police were sent out in pairs—one white man, one colored man. For McKinney and Holly found that in Detroit the riot got out of hand because police sided with the white people, and the Negroes did not trust the police. These were some of the measures which have taken Cleveland through the war thus far without riots.

In spite of what has been said, any person would be deluded to think that *all* is wonderful in Cleveland. The city has slums. It has known many civic failures. Many of its churches remain conventional institutions preaching about "paltry sins and petty virtues."

Yet the overwhelming fact remains that Cleveland people within their churches and most of their institutions have been attempting to follow a vision of a city redeemed. Cleveland is encouraging evidence of what a city can do when it has the moral will to plan intelligently and to act democratically.

COMING IN SOCIAL ACTION

Two Issues on the Churches and the War

DECEMBER—"The Relation of the Church to the War in the Light of the Christian Faith." (Prepared under the direction of Dr. Robert L. Calhoun.)

JANUARY—"The Churches and the War—An Historical Perspective." (Prepared under the direction of Dr. Roland H. Bainton.)

Both of these statements have been prepared by some of the leading churchmen in America. They were commissioned by the Federal Council of Churches to speak plainly and fearlessly on the gravest problem of our world—WAR.

Both of these issues will also be available in an international relations study packet obtainable from the Council for Social Action.
